

INSPECTION SERVICES

Fiscal Year 2009

The Annual Town Report for Inspection Services for FY 09 is dedicated to George Staples.

George Staples served as the Gas Inspector for Amherst from August of 1982 until July 2009. George always had a smile and usually a joke, one that he could not wait to share. His upbeat personality and inner strength would put a positive spin on the busiest day. And there were a lot of busy days in the Inspection Services Department in FY 09.

The new permitting system was implemented in October of 2008. Implementation of the new system was soon followed by the physical move of the Inspection Services Department from the ground floor to the second floor of Town Hall in the spring of 2009. The move was accomplished in just a few days and “down time” in terms of public access to the Department was minimal. The intent of both the physical move and the new permitting system is to better integrate the Departments that work closely in the permitting process. Inspections, Planning and Conservation are now centralized under one functional area.

This Department issued 2,581 permits in this fiscal year; with a total income from those permits of \$564,991.80. The total estimated cost of construction for all the building permits issued was \$36,509,718.

There were two new commercial buildings permitted in FY 09 and a total of 51 permits issued for work on commercial buildings. This total does not include permits for signs.

On the residential side there were permits issued for nine new single-family dwellings, four new multi-family buildings with a combined total of 28 new units between them, and five permits for conversions of single-family or commercial spaces to residential units for a total of seven new units between them. This will result in the addition of 44 new dwelling units to the housing stock in Amherst.

Amherst College began renovations on two dorm buildings, Seelye and Hitchcock. The college also obtained permits for conversion of or additions to three buildings for office space. Hampshire College began renovations on four dorms.

The many projects ongoing at U-Mass in addition to the projects in Town and on the other two campuses have kept our Electrical Inspectors busy. While the 546 plumbing and gas permits issued have been handled by our part-time Plumbing and Gas Inspectors.

As can be seen it was another busy and complicated year for the Inspection Services Department. We would like to thank all of the employees in Planning, Conservation and IT that made our transition to the second floor so seamless and welcoming.

And to George we say good-bye. You will never know how important you were to us last year and in the many years previous. You will be sorely missed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bonita J. Weeks
Building Commissioner